

THE
P R I E S T ' S
Duty & Dignity.

Preached at the Trien-
niall Visitation in *Amphill* 1635.

August 18. by J A S P E R
F I S H E R Presbyter, and
Rector of *Willesden* in
Bedfordshire.

And published by Command.

I magnifie mine Office.

Rom. 11. 13.



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Perlegi hanc *Concio-*
nem (cui titulus The
Priest's Duty and Dign-
ity) quæ continet folia 9.
in quibus nihil reperio quod
non maximâ cum utilitate
publicâ imprimatur, sub ea
tamen conditione, ut vel in-
tra annum proxime se-
quentem typis mandentur,
vel hæc *Licentia* sit omni-
nò irrita.

Guilielmus Haywood,
R. P. D. Archiep.
Cant. Capellanus
domest.



THE PRIEST'S DVTY and Dignity.

Malac. 2.7. *For the Priests lips should keepe knowledge, and they shoule seeke the Law at his Mouth : for he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*

isher, J.



Y Argument, like my Auditory, is compounded of Priest and People : Both were now faulty, the Priest ignorant and lazie, the People unrulie and lawlesse; the unworthiness of the first, and the ungodliness of the second, mutually producing and mutually pardoning one another; And

in the proverb of *Isaiah* and *Hoseah* (*Isa.24.2. Hos.4.9.*) *Like People, like Priest.* Wherfore this *doctor angelicus* our Prophet *Malachi*, in this verse roundly takes up both; intimating their defects, by declaring their duties : *For the Priests lips, &c.*

We have here three generall parts.

1. The first, *ad patres conscriptos*, What is required of the Priest; *The Priests lips should keepe knowlidge.*

2. The second, *ad quirites*, what is commanded the People; *They should seeke the Law at his mouth.*

3. The third, is a reason of both duties wrapt up in a briefedescription of the Priest; *For he is the Messenger of the Lord of Hosts.*

In the first generall to examin the parcells, seeing every rayment of gold is gold, and every word of Gods Word is true and waighty.

1. The word [*Cohen, Priest*] may include

Duty and Dignity.

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isher, .

include by concommittance the Levite, and by correspondence the Presbyter and Deacon in the new Testament; for this duty of knowing and teaching respects the Clergy in generall, and is as large as both Covenants. 2. By [Lips] we gather that this knowledg must not be buried in his brest, but uttered by his breath; for how shall the Lai-ty beleeve without hearing? or heare without speaking? and of all expressions a live-voice hath the most advantage: Againe, we gather that this Office is not *χαιρεσις* but *χαιρουσα*, not a sanctifying grace, but an edifying gift; this cole from the Altar should warm his heart, but it must touch his Lips. 3. [Keeping] implies, saith S. Hierome, a thrifty imployment of this heavenly endowment, *non dixit proferent, sed custodient*, in due season to lay it forth, not to poure it out; to sowe it

it in the field, not to throwe it away, so to hoord up this Aliment that the people be not famished; so to disburse this Talent, that himself turn not bankrupt. 4. [Knowledge] is a large word, and may equalize Sapience in *Tully*, the science of all humane and divine matters, or S. Paul's possibility *1. Cor. 13.* *To speak with the tongue of men and Angells,* to be a universall Linguist, *then to understand all Mysteries and all Knowledge;* to be cunning in the seven liberall Sciences and the three Philosophies; *then to have the gift of Prophecy;* to expound aright the holy Scriptures: For a Divines knowledge, and Divinity, are not termes of the same extent. A Priest here must have [*Dakhath*] and [*Torah*] Knowledge to expound the sense of darke Mysteries, and Law to pronounce Sentence in doubtfull Cases: **Contemplative wisdom**

dom to certifie the understanding, and practicall Prudence to satisfie the Conscience. The foure Termes thus explicated are again coagulated into this briefe Doctrine, *The Doct. Priests Lips should keepe knowledge, or Clergy-men should be learned Teachers.*

If *Quintilians Romane Orator*, much more the Divine Orator, should bee a mortall God omniscious: like a Bee composing, or rather like honey composed of the vigour and virtues of all flowers. Let thy *Urim* and *Thummim* bee with thy holy one, as dying Moses prayes, *Dent.33. Then shall they teach Jacob thy judgements, and Israel thy law.* *Urim* and *Thummim*, that is, demonstration and truth, as the *Septuagint*; illumination and integrity, as the moderne; learning and holinesse, as *Paulus Fagius*; faith and love, as Saint *Paul* seemes to render

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render them, 1 Thess. 5. 8. A golden bell and a pomegranate, a golden bell and a pomegranate round about the hemme of his robe, Exod. 28. that is, eloquence and sapience, a sweet sound and a wholsome taste, a voyce to awake, and a virtue to nourish and heale a sinner. If the Priest lookt upon his [*Hoshen*, his breast-plate,] the two mysticall signes. if he lookt upon his [*Mehhil*, his long robe,] the imbroidered fringes would put him in minde of this duty. In the Tabernacle, the seven lampes of a golden candlesticke, were a Typicall warning of his il-lightning the mindes; the twelve loaves of Shew-bread, of his feeding the soules of the people. Nay the whole Universe, with the seven planets, twelve signes, foure elements, meteors, and their affecti-
ons, was lively deciphered in that mysticall building and Sacerdotall garments;

garments; teaching him Astronomie and naturall Philosophie, in those hieroglyphicall characters, as *Flavius Josephus* wittily shewes, *Antiqu. lib. 3. cap. 8.* It was enjoyned a Statute for ever to the Aaronites, soberly to put a difference betweene cleane and uncleane, , *Levit. 10.* which referd to the peoples person, required skill in the infinite cases of defilement and positive lawes: or referd to their leprosie, required some skill in diseases and medicines: or referd to their diet, required some skill in the nature of beasts, fishes, and foules: and this one part of judging between cleane and uncleane fills up many Tracts in their Talmud. In a word, They were not onely to the people, Doctors, and Masters of ceremony, but also Physicians, Counsellers, Lawyers, Judges in peace, Heraulds in warre: and above all, ready Scribes in the Law and Prophets. For

For the new Testament, reade the Canons of Saint Paul to *Ti-
mothie and Titus*, Μὴ ἐπεργάσασθαι,
Μὴ λογιαζεῖν, Μὴ κενολογεῖν, Not to teach perversly, not to wrangle verbally, not to speake emptily: three rules which will much contract us and direct us to a solid preaching. *Holy
fast a forme of sound Words and
publique Prayers, give attendance to
reading and doctrine, bee able by
sound Doctrine to exhort and to
convince, to fill the mouth of the
hungry, and to stop the mouth of
gaine-sayers; to be διδασκαλοί, which
in Greece would signifie, Able and
ready to teach; and confirmites Ma-
ster *Calvins*, *Omnis Sacerdotes sunt
Doctores.**

Thus a heavenly Scribe, like a good houfholder, bringeth forth out of his treasure, the two Testaments, *Things New and Old*, sayes our Saviour, *Matth. 13. 52*. Thus is

hee well furnished from the two great Marts of the world, Athens and Jerusalem, first dipt in all secular science, as the ground-colour; then dyed in graine of true Theologie, before he puts on [shani] the twice-dipt purple of the Priesthood. Thus his lips like lillies drop sweet-smelling myrrhe: they are the garners of Joseph, the armory of David, the wine-cellar of the Spouse: they are a precious casket, which once opened, a sweet perfume fills all the Church, and a glistening jewell ravishes the eyes: Nay, they are the very Arke shadowed by Cherubims, in which was nothing but Manna for consolation, a Rod for correction, and the Tables of the Law for spirituall instruction. *The Priest's lips should keepe knowledge.*

This truth is crost by some infa-
ction, by others in fact. First, the

Novelist

Novelist can easily disclaime this precept of knowledge, by disclaiming the Jewish name of Priest: For there is no Priest, as he fondly thinkes, without a bleeding Sacrifice, and a bloudy Altar. But if not Ecclesiasticall Writers, yet Evangelicall Prophets might teach him; who foretold under the Gospell, Sacrifice and Oblation, *Isai. 19.21.* *Malach. 1.11.* Altar and Incense, *Isai. 19.19.* *Mal. 1.11.* *Psal. 141.2.* with *Revelat. 8.3.* Priests and Levites, *Isai. 61, 6. 66, 21.* And how Christ now can bee a high Priest, *Heb. 2.17. 3, 1. 10, 21.* and have no inferiour Priests, I cannot well conceive. Indeed the word *Ιερεύς* in the new Testament, is not given to an Evangelicall Minister, but to a Leviticall Officer; which was to avoid the ambiguity, and the danger of confounding and mixing Law and Gospell; as some Christian Pharisees

Pharisees even then desired to doe. For when the Leviticall Priesthood was abolished and abandoned, the next ages and ancient Fathers boldly call the Ministers of the Gospell, *Iesu's, Sacerdotes*, proper Priests. But seeing our word, *Priest*, is not derived from *Iesu's*, but from the Apostles *Πρεσβίτερος*, or *Justine Martyrs πρεσβύτερος*, there is leſſe reason we should leave a rationall etymologie, for a reason-leſſe fancie, or be ashamed of the Title, when we must discharge the Office.

Secondly, The Scripturist will circumcise and confine this knowledge to the written Canon onely; all other learning is Pagane, profane, unfancitified: but their projects returne upon their heads.

1. They would banish profane and lewd manners; and what sooner way, then by pulling downe Universities, and setting up illiterate

B teachers,

teachers, to bring in ignorance, the mother of profanesse & Atheisme? 2. They would have the pure word preached. And what better meanes, then by comparing Translations, and consulting antiquity, to expound the sense and divide the Word aright? Which cannot be done well without the whole Masse of reall knowledge. But I doubt, there is a loathing in them of what they never knew, and it is not their piety but idlenesse, to condemne all other Authors: and the applauding of this hath a farther reach in some of their Abettors; the lesse learning, the lesse stipend; and such trifling speakers will accept a tithe of tithes. For in this we agree with them, and shake hands, that the sacred Word must be the *Basis*, the predominant element, the principall ingredient in all teaching: the divine Scripture must bee the bracelet

bracelet and frontlet of a Priest, in his hand and in his head, this must close his eyes at night, & awake his thoughts in the morning; that hee may be eloquent and mighty in the Scriptures, like *Apollos*, *Act. 18.24*. And repeat as much *verbatim*, if possible, as blinde *John* the Ægyptian could in *Eusebius History*, *lib. 8. cap. 22*. Yet to spoile the Ægyptians of their ornaments, and dresse up the Tabernacle: to shave and pare the captive woman, and then espouse her: to brandish *Goliath's* sword against the Giant himselfe, was alwayes thought lawfull and laudable.

Thirdly, The Romanist will improprieate and restraine this text to the infallibility of their sole Bishop. His salt of manners may be infatuated, but his light of doctrine cannot be obscured. His feet may slip, but his lips cannot erre. What, a

B 2 man,

man, and infallible? Yes, sayes the Canonist, pronoucing in his chaire. Why what vertue doth his chaire adde to his knowledge? Yes, sayes *Bellarmino*, For now Gods providence attends that hee shall not be rash or deceiving. A bold Fancy, to arrogate more to their Pope, Then *Moses* in his Chaire, or any Prophet, Then Saint *Peter* his predecessor, or Christ himself upon the earth did ever challenge, namely, To be believed upon his bare word: And a great Fondnesse, To transubstantiate A common Admonition into a particular prophecie; A Priest in generall into their *Roman* Prelate; and a Manifest precept, as *Ribera* confesses, into a promise of infallible knowledge, wheras this Injunction is too often, and easily broken, as the next Verse shews. But just as the Iewish Synagogue vaunted, *The Law shall not perish*

rise from the Priest, *Ier. 18.18.* when they resolved in the same Verse, Not to give heed to any of Gods words: So the flattering Canonists and Parasites then cried up most the Popes unerring judgement, when they did least search the Scriptures, and most abuse the Christian World with new-coin'd Articles.

Fourthly, But my doctrine suffers more by Practice, then Opinion: When Sacerdotall ignorance ascends the Cathedrall Pulpit; And becomes a great dishonour to the God of Knowledge, A Soul-murder to the hunger-starved children, *Lament. 4.4.* And a curse to their own labours; *Toyling all night, in ignorance; and taking nothing, as it was, Luk. 5.5.* Nothing indeed, unlesse the wages of *Balaam*, of whom the *Jews* speak in a By-word *The Camel coveting Hornes, lost his Eares;*

B 3

And

And Balaam loving Hire, of an O-
pen-eyed Seer, Num. 24.3. becomes
a false South-fayer, Los. 13.22. So
these Mercenary Levites (for com-
monly slothfull ignorance is joyned
with busie worldliness) seeking
themselves most and outward or-
naments, doe most lose themselves
and their native indowments. In
this case, you may heare the Lord
complayning; *My people are destroyed
for lack of knowledge;* And then see
the Priest degraded, when the peo-
ple was not instructed, As Crates
struck the Master for the Schoole-
boyes error: *Because thou hast re-
jected knowledge, I will also reject
thee, that thou shalt be no Priest to me,*
Hos. 4.6. In this case, The Prophets
turn Satyristes, *Isai. 29.56. Ier. 23.*
Ezech. 13. Hos. 9. Mich. 3. Zech. 11.
Mal. 2. calling them, Blinde Seers,
Drowsie Watchmen; Dumbe Dogges,
of no use to warne the Flocke, or
fright

fright the Wolfe ; Cloudes without rain, hiding the Sun-beams and di-stilling no shoures ; Cisterns without water , deceiving the thirsty passenger; Nor starres leading unto Christ, but wandering Comets and *Ignes Fatali* ; Blinde Leaders of the Blinde; loving Saint Peters, *Kill and eat*, But not Saint Peters, Feed my *Flock*; *Aurei calices, Lignei Sacerdotes*, as Bishop Boniface complain'd, *De Consecrat. dist. I. c. 44.* Woodden Priests & Church-Idols: To whom the Vision is a Booke sealed , and must shamefully confesse , *Isai. 29. 12. I am not learned; Or Zech. 13. 5. I am no Prophet, I am an Husbandman; Or Amos 7. 14. I was no Prophet, nor Prophets sonne, but an Herdman: So presuming to sit in Moses chaire, before they sit at Gamaliels feet, they make up a dangerous contradiction in adjecte, Doctor in doctus, n untaught Teacher.*

Ob.

Sol.

But som will say we live in know-
ing times, and (*Pygmæi in turribus
eorum*, as the vulgar reads it, *Eze. 27
11.*) though we are Pygmies in stu-
dy and industry, yet exalted upon
the antient Towres of Learning,
by their helpe, we see farther then
all fore-going ages; and we laugh
at the dunsery of old Monks and
Friars: *Græcum est, non potest legi,*
*bonus Grammaticus, malus Hæreti-
cus*; when *bene con. bene can. bene le.*
and the Latin of a neck-verse was
sufficient for a Clearke. Indeede to
speake comparatively, those middle
times were more infested with deafe
and dumb Spirits; Our age with
lame feet and withered hands; they
were *Noctambulones*, sleep-walkers,
who did move and goe without
sense and feeling; we are *Apople-
sticks*, who have witt and memorie
without action and motion, and
have more need of Devotion then

In-

Instruction, of practice then pre-
cepts, of Discipline then Doctrine.
*Ant si quicquid in buccam venerit ef-
futire, bullatis nugis intumescere,
facetis aut mutuis convitis plebem
oblectare, longis ambagibus & mag-
no conatu nihil dicere aut docere; adeò
ut stultitia prædicationis, I.Cor.1.
jam transeat in stultitiam Prædican-
tium; If this be that type of doctrine,
Rom.6.17. and that Necessity of
preaching, I.Cor.9.16. 2.Tim.4.2.
so urged by Saint Paul: Then, I
confesse, many may passe for great
Teachers, and boast themselves a-
gainst all antiquity. But if by the
least homogeneous parcell I may
guesse at the whole bulke of good
literature, & judge of others wants
by my own: while wee consider ei-
ther the great difficulties of a direct
and solid expounding the Canon a-
gainst Atheist, Jew, Hereticke, and
Libertine: or consider the many*

pre-

present dissentions and controversies among Christians, which must needs be fathered upon Error, and Error upon Ignorance: Or looke up upon the two famous patternies of Iewish and Christian Divines, *viz. Moses learned in all the wisdome of the Egyptians, and Saint Paul wise in all the learning of the Grecians*: a great Linguist, and a good Artist: Or looke downe upon the voluminous books of the Iesuites Societie, and the double harvest of Dutch Writers: Or regard the direction of our late Sovereigne sent to the University; and both the counsell and exemplar of our learned Prelates, for studying of Ecclesiasticall Histories, Councels, Fathers, Canon-law, Schoolmen, and publick Liturgies: we may I feare, almost turn Scepticks, and say wee know nothing, or only know this, that we know nothing, or fall into

Saint

Saint Pauls out-cry, *qui tis, And who is sufficient for these things?* For shall the benefit of Printing be revealed, and shall the growth of Learning be decayed? Shall Colledges and Libraries increase, and shall Knowledge decrease? Shall our studious Knighthood and Gentry flourish and fructifie in all kind of Science, and shall *Aarons Rod* only wither? Shall wee have so many incouragements from our Prince and Bishops, and shall wee confiscate all by an affected ignorance in teaching? So I passe from his *Concio ad Clerum*, to his *Homily ad populum*: when the Priest is throughly qualified, hee may be safely consulted; *And they should seeke the Law at his mouth.*

The peoples generall duty is comprized in three termes. First, *How?* *They should seeke.* Secondly, *What?* *The Law.* Thirdly, *Where?* *At the Priest's mouth.*

2.

First,

First, they should seeke it; not lazy in their house, not drowsie in Gods house; but with earnest desire and outward diligence they should search it and pursue after it. They must not only learn the principall precepts of the Law, for the *Israelite* was also bound to catechize his Family at home: nor only come to the publick lection of it in their solemne Assemblies; for (as some think) Synagogues began to be erected before the second Temple: But they must continually inquire of it in all doubtfull cases of private actions with customary carefulnesse & pious alacrity. As *Ahab* & *Obadiah* parted the Land, to search for grasse and water in the great drought, *1.King.18.* As *Ismael* lay gasping for drinke, *Gen.21.* As the yong children cry for bread, *Lament.4.4.* So they should seeke it with the *Samaritan* woman, *Sir, Give me this wa-*
ter,

ter, *John 4. 15.* And with the Jewish people, *Lord, evermore, give us this bread, Ioh. 6. 34.* Rejoycing in themselves; *I was glad when they said unto me, Let us go into the house of the Lord, Psal. 122.* exciting others; *Come and let us go up to the Mountain of the Lord, Isai. 2.* Lest for their negligence and curiositie, hunting more after the Man, then the Law; *God send not a famine of bread, nor a thirst for water, but of hearing the Word of the Lord, and they wander from Sea to Sea, and take up voluntary pilgrimages to seek the Word, and shall not find it, Am. 8.* For as Pope Gregory wrote to our King *Ethelbert, How shall God heare the Priest praying to him for you, if yee will not heare him speaking from God to you?*

Secondly, *They should seek the Law.* By the *Law* is directly understood, *The Codex of all Mosaicall Ordinances contained in the Pentateuch;*

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stateuch; but largely taken, the whole Word of God, as the rule of well and happy living, or all divine Truth necessary for mans salvation. The Priest must have universall knowledge, but the people must seeke substantiall law: the Orbe of his comprehension may be larger then the Spheare of their capacitie. *The Law*: not Cobweb subtleties, not pleasing superfluities, nor scrupulous fancies; but the necessary rules of holinesse and righteousness: And that awfull Doctrine, which was once proclaimed to the World from the top of *Sinai* with blacknesse and tempest, and the sound of a trumpet, and thunders and lightnings of Him,

*Cujus excussum manu
Utraque Phœbi sentiunt fulmen
domus.*

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That Law, which should make both their eares, not itch, but tingle; and pierce between the joynts and marrow; while the Sword of the Spirit in the mouth of the Priest, sacrifices the soule, and executes judgement upon the conscience by a secret freeing or condemning them, in a modell of Gods owne Tribunall, and the last Assises.

Again, *the Law*, which he speaks, not which hee makes, of which hee is the Lawyer, not the Law-giver. *One is our Rabbi and Master. Math. 23.* *And there is but one Law-giver, who is able to save, and to destroy, Iam. 4. 12.* It is a *Depositum*, intrusted to thee, not invented by thee: which thou hast received, not conceived: a matter not of wit, but doctrine: in which thou art not the auhour but the keeper; as *Vincentius Lirinen sis* runs upon it in descant.

Again, *the Law*; here admire the order

order and wisdome of divine Oeconomy, God made his will manifest by Apparitions and inspired Prophets untill the Law was given: Then as the written Word increased, Miracles and Visions decreased, and at the Captivity *Urim and Thummim* ceased: and now our *Malachi* being to close up the Prophets also, there remained only this sole office of the Priest to teach the Law: Here then hee tels the people what they must trust to, as it is, *Isai.8. To the Law and to the testimony*; and plainly warnes them, *Chap. 4. 4. Remember the Law of Moses*: For ye must looke for no more Angels, Prophets, Dreames, or Visions; till that great Prophet come, ushered by another *Malachie, Iohn Baptist.*

Thirdly, *They should seeke the Law at his mouth*: not at a Counsellours mouth to undoe their neighbours by

by litigious suites; but at a Priests mouth to save their owne soules by religious duties. To consult the Divine before the Attorney, would end many unchristian controversies; at least it would make us know orderly, what case and cause that is which cannot be regulated by Scripture. It is no praise for the people, to be ~~avrodiant~~; self-taught, as Saint *Austine* reports of *Antony* the Monke, lest they truly use Saint *Jeromes* word, *Nullum præmium sequens pessimum magistrum memet ipsum habeo*, having no leading Instructor, I was to my selfe the worst Schoolmaster: But he must be ~~avrodiant~~, taught of God, inwardly by his Spirit, outwardly by his Priest. The Priests mouth is the Lords oracle, and the peoples speaking Law: *Os justi, fons vita.* Prov. 10. In publicke and private matters their conscience must be directed by his sentence,

tence, and though *Plutarch* so much discommend *στόμα ἀκείσον, ραγιάδεον*, a mouth without a locke or a doore, to let out words, and keep in secrēts; yet this mouth is best, when it stands wide open to all the Parish.

But these three Rivelets fall into one channell, and generall doctrine; viz. *Lay persons with all readinesse should be ruled by the Priest in matters of Religion.* They must not expect visions and heavenly voices, broach Dreames and fained Prophecies; dreame of new Inspirations and Enthusiasmes; or challenge the propheeticall spirit of interpretation. They may repeat and ruminante, examine and apply; but not expound the text, much lesse adde any new doctrine in their **Conclave** or **Confistory**. *Interrogate Sacerdotes legem*, as the Lord himselfe gives example, *Hag. 2.11.* In a point of law put the case to the Priest: else they keep but

a conventicle without either Ephod or Levite, and in stead of obeying the Lord in his Officer at the doore of the Tabernacle, they worship a private god *Lar* in their Halls and Parlours.

Again, as the Laity is here bound to depend on the Priest for the Law, so the Priest is limited to answere by the Law; which strictly taken as the Law of *Moses*, was nationall and temporary; but as it involved the Law of God, expounded amply by the Prophets, finished compleatly by Christ, it is a rule eternall and universall; no wisdome of Senators, no tradition of Romanists, no inspiration of Anabaptists, no invention of men or Angels, being able to adde any point necessary to mans salvation. For it were presumption, to coine a new doctrine since the Sonne of his bosome in these last times hath revealed the whole will of

his Father; to looke for better countfaile, since the wisdome of God hath directed; to speak a new speech since the Word it selfe hath declared; to talke of late revelations, since the Messias hath sealed up Vision and Prophecie: or to adde one word after Him, who is *Amen*; or one letter after him, who is *Omega*. It remaines then, that the Priest with solid knowledge immedately teach the divine Law; and that the people with humble piety immedately consult the Divine Officer, who is *sequester dei & hominum*, sayes Saint Jerome, their mouth to God, and Gods mouth to them: that so the sacred Scripture may be clearly expounded, Uniformity maintained, Schisme and Heresie banished, Devotion increased, Discipline restored, the people edified, the Priest honoured, Gods Law magnified, and God himselfe glorified.

Here

Here I am to passe like *Jonathan*, betweene two sharpe Rocks, *Bozez*, and *Semih*, rightly to bound out, the Priests authority and the peoples spirituall obedience: for there hath been ebbing & flowing, & a mutuall inerochment. First, the Romanist will yeeld to his Prelate absolute submission of conscience, without examination or appeale. Secondly, the Anti-romanist will obey his Pastor no further then he speaks apparent Word of God. Thus too servile or too sawcie, they will be either his fellow or his slave: betweene these two extremes, Truth is the meane proportionall. For it were senselesse to conceive, that by this Ecclesiastical Ordinance, either God should depart from any originall Authority, or his Word should lose any Canonicall dignity; or that a prime power authenticall were settled in the

Prelate: For (to omit usuall Reasons) this were to accuse God of un-sufficient revelation , to make the Canon variable and subordinate, to exalt a man above divine Law to the danger of an Oecumenicall defection. Againe , it were as sensesse and more contradicting my text to maintaine that the people may disobey the Prelate in spirituall matters, except they plainly know them to bee true ; since their knowledge is derived by the Priesthood, as the only ordinary meanes ; to which they are bound, except they plainly know the contrary ; And the Priest contradict himselfe or the fundamettall points of the Law. If himselfe might directly binde the Conscience by his rules, why is *know-ledge* and Gods *Law* here mentioned to direct him? If they may expound and judge of the Law , why are

are they sent to his Mouth, and not to the Booke it selfe; and so by a more compendious and infallible way, they might have wanted a Priesthood? If the Priest shall be obeyed onely upon expresse warrant of Law already knowne, hee is not their Teacher but Remembrancer, they obey not the person but the Law or their own judgement; wheras this Prophet binds them to commend the whole regiment of their souls in publick and private, to their living law and Gods lawfull Deputy.

For that the same intensive and conscientiable obedience is not due to the Ecclesiasticall as well as to the Civill Magistrate; and to the Evangelicall as well as to the Leviticall Priest seemes very improbable: *Let every Soule be subject unto the higher powers. Rom. 13.1. And Obey them*

sinot

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that have the rule over you, and submit your selves, for they watch for your soules. Hebr. 13. 17. They have not rejected thee, but they have rejected me, I. Sam. 8. 7. He that beareth you, beareth me; and hee that despiseth you, despiseth me, Lnk. 10. 16. The man that will do presumptuously, and will not hearken unto the Priest or unto the Judge, even that man shall die, Dent. 17. 12. And every soule which will not heare that Prophet, shall be destroyed from among the people, ACTS 3. 23. Wheras now proud Libertines have turned Ghostly Father into Fellow-speaker; and the bodie of ancient Discipline is chāged like Sibyl, or echo into a meer voice; & the profane vulgar, if a shoo leak, or a wall crack, or an Ague shake, know what trade to resort unto: but let the conscience shake with doubt before the fact, and quake for feare after the fact; let the soule

soule be mortally sick for want of e-
vacuatiō; let a sinful leprosie require
daily direction, and our Saviour to
maintain Sacerdotall authority bid
them, *Go shew your selvs to the Priests,*
Luk. 17. 14. Yet they will venter
their lives, their eternall lives, and
die in their sinnes; and we may burn
all the Casuists, as having no use of
that soveraigne Divinity. Dearely
beloved, wee are falne into happy
times, when nothing doth trouble
the conscience of men, or men make
conscience of nothing, which is
most to be feared. Thus having vi-
llified the power of Priesthood and
Christis Episcopall Crosier (as his
regal Scepter) in the laws Divine &
Ecclesiasticall, in the Sacraments
and Sacramentals, as Confirmation,
Confession, Penance, Orders, Ex-
treme Visitation, and particular
Absolution: We then fondly won-
der

der at the profanenesse of the times, and marvell that preaching does no more good; as if the Flock could be fed, cured, and governed only by the Shepheards Whistle. The hearer can easily contemne the power of the Pulpit, and divert what is thrown at that distance: For if we teach with authority, it is proud and stately: if reprehend sharply, it is spleen and malice: if instruct meekly, it is not powerfull: if admonish lovingly, why not others? If they like the man indeed, they give him leave to say what hee list, and take leave to doe what they list; but if they like not the man, what they understand they despise; what they understand not, they censure; And with the Donatists in Saint *Austine*, *quod volumus, sanctum est*; It is not holy doctrine till they approve it.

The two Duties thus severally considered, are againe naturally

ly concorperated, and so affoord us
many points and questions incident
to the Times, and pertinent to my
Text. As, whether the Priest or
Clergy may erre in doctrine, & how
this may be avoided? Whether Pre-
lates according to the Law may
make Orders binding the Consci-
ence? Whether Clergie-men may
not meddle in Civill Justice, if the
Law heere containes the Judiciall
part, as well as the Ceremoniall?
Whether reading of the Law bee
not preaching; and whether preach-
ing, *πο ληρωσιν*, be not a publicke
declaring of Gods will by persons
authorized in due time and place,
either *verbatim*, or paraphrastically,
or at the most by way of explicati-
on and application directly? Nor
but that other discourses of Scrip-
ture may serve for the stall, or the
deske, on some extraordinary As-
semblies.

semblies. What is that eternall Law, without knowledge of which none can be saved? Whether the Law of *Moses* is abolished, or established, or partly altered, and how farre by Christ? Whether Christ hath not delegated as much spirituall authority to the Evangelicall, as *Moses* did to the *Aaronicall* Priesthood? Then by deduction, whether the English Church by her Constitutions hath not sufficiently provided for the salvation of every Parish, and consequently of every person in the Parish? That so the envy of pre-eminence in Priest and Parishioner; The curiosity and partiality of hearing the Word; The fancie of wanting the meanes of Grace; The disturbance of settled Christians; The giddinesse of unsetled Sectaries; The discouraging conceit of an impossibility in common people, of e-
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ver fully knowing the truth and their duties, may be taken away: and obedient livers onely counted religious professours. But I dare not looke upon these Controversies: I onely observe, there must bee in G O D S Church, an order of Priest and people, of Clergy and Laitie, of teaching and hearing, for the perpetuating of Religion, for the congregating of the Saints, and finishing the Kingdome of Grace: but this point also I dare not prosecute, for the time would faile mee; though a doctrine most excellent, both in the story and the uses. So I passe from the two Duties, to his perswasive Reason, wrapt up in a short description of the Priest, *For hee is the Messenger of the L O R D of Hosts.*

I but, *Hee is the Angell*, rather sayes the Hebrew; and so say, the ancient

cient Greek and Latine, R. Salomon, Junius, Luther, and the Spanish, and hee alludes to his own name, *Malachy*, as Saint Hierome thinkes: At least, he is the Ambassadour, as some modern Translations: But our English runs low and flat. For though the word, *Malac*, may largely signifie all, yet to speake fitly, a private man sends Messengers, a Prince Ambassadours, the Messias Apostles, and the Lord of Heaven Angels. Gods Nuntioes are Angels, either celestiall, as *Gabriel*, Luk.1.26. Or terrestriall, and then either extraordinary Prophets, as *John Baptist*, Mat.3.1. Or usually and ordinary, as the Priest here. Neither is this testimony denied him in either Testament: *An Angell came up from Gilgal*, Judg.2.1. that is, Phineas the Priest, say the Jews: *say not before the Angell*, Eccles.5.6. that is, the judg-

judging High Priest, say Expositors: *A woman must be covered in the Church 1. Cor. 11. 10.* Because of the Angels, that is, the teaching Ministers say *Beza* and *Drusius*: And the *Angels of the seven Churches, Revel. 1. 20.* are Bishops, say we: or Pastors and Superintendents, say they, who cannot pronounce that *shibboleth*. *Dionysius de cœlesti Hierarchia, cap. 12.* will give a Reason of this promiscuous naming: An Angell being the lowest order of the Nine in the Church triumphant, and a Priest being the highest order of the seven in the Church militant; They symbolize in nature, and have their names counterchanged: To shew the unity of one totall Church in Heaven and Earth under Christ: *He is called a ministring spirit, this a spirituall Minister: Hee a celestiall Priest, this a terrestriall Angell: By*

a like *Metathesis*, as *John Baptist* is called *Malachi*, *Chap. 3.17.* To shew the harmonious transfiguration and connexion of both Testaments. They are those Angels upon *Jacobs Ladder*, ascending by prayer, descending by doctrine: And as in old time, so still, the glory of the Lord appeares from between the Cherubims in the likenesse of winged Angels.

Or if they be Ambassadours and Messengers, they are sent from heaven by the L O R D of Hosts, about a peace betweene God the Father and sinfull Mankind; and then concerning a Marriage betweene his Sonne Christ, and the Church of Saints: Now then we are Ambassadors for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us; we pray yee in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God, 2.Cor.5.20. For we are jealous over you with godly jea-

jealousie, For wee have espoused you to one Husband, that we may present you a glorious Church, not having spot or wrinkle, as a chaste Virgin to Christ, 2.Cor.11.2. Ephes.5.27. But I come to the use of this Description, for it reflects upon the duty of both parties.

First, it teaches the Priest humble Modestie in undertaking this message. To imitate rather Moses, *I am slow of speech, or Jeremy, I am a child, I cannot speake*: Then forward *Abimeaz, Let me run I pray*. To such hastie Novices, *John Pecham* sometime Archbishop of Canterbury, applyes that of *David*, 2.Sam.10.5. *Maneze in Jericho donec crescat barba vestra*: And others most fitly that of our Saviour, *Luke* 24.49. *Sedete in Ierusalem, quoadusque induamini virtute ex alto*. For what purity? what gravity? what science? what

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prudence? what composed and prepared elocution may be justly expected of an Angell? And *how shall they preach, except they be sent?* Rom. 10. sent, first by God secretly exciting them, then by the Church lawfully ordaining them, then by their conscience plainly assuring them.

2. Secondly, it teaches him carefull fidelity in reporting this message. The *Ægyptians* did signifie a holy Scribe by the Hieroglyphicke of a *Sive*; and wee know Him, whose *Fan* is in his hand, to be the great Sheepheard and Bishop of soules: both are separating instruments, and denote that spirituall discretion, which is the soule of all judgement. That hee neither trust to his owne wit or invention too boldly, nor rely upon his memory, or nimble tongue too sodainly, nor vent himselfe too hastily; lest hee speake his own

own rude words, and not the Lord's message. *Here the word at my mouth,* and then give them warning from me. *Is the tenour of Gods Commission,* Ezech. 3. 17. That hee neither augment, nor diminish, nor corrupt, nor confound, nor misplace, the substantiall parts of divine Re-velation: But can truly say with the Prophets, *Heare yee the Word of the Lord;* & with S. Paul, *I received of the Lord, what I delivered unto you.* For the Angels are thought to speak no more on earth, then what they heard in Heaven: and the same is well expressed by Homer, when he makes the Angels dispatched from his Gods, to receive and to declare the same things by the same lines: Nor is this a needless Tautologie, but a most observant veracitie.

Thirdly, it teaches him bold magnanimity in discharging this

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message. I know not how to imbreathe better courage into a Priest then by representing unto him the solemnity of his Ordination. When the Bishop laid his hands upon thy Head; Remember, thou art set apart and separated from all common and profane businesses. When thou heardest, *Receive the Holy Ghost*; remember, thou art elevated above this wicked world, and indued with a heavenly power. When thou heardest, *Whose sins thou dost forgive, they are forgiven*; O then remember, Thou retain not thy own sins, who art to loose the sins of others. When thou tookest the Bible, with authoritie to preach the Word, and to minister the holy Sacraments; remember thy Commission was sealed in the Court of Heaven, and thou dispatched a messenger from the Lord of Hosts. Be not then flattered or terri-

terrified to please the sinfull multitude, and to abuse thy Masters trust. Keepe thy Angelicall state, retaine the habit and language of thy heavenly Citie, conforme not thy selfe to their base vices, and vicious customes.

— *Mitte ostia, Cæsar,
Mitte, sed in magna legatum qua-
re popinâ:*

If they hate thee for this Non-conformity and strangenesse, know they hated God and Christ first: *If yee were of the World, the World would love his owne*, as our Saviour pronounces upon his own experience: *But now yee are not of this World*, but yee descend like Angels and heavenly Legates into this lower World; and returning home, yee must expect a reward of your Master

ster sending, not of those forreine
and mundane Nations to whom yee
are sent: *For yee are the messengers
of the Lord of Hosts.*

Lastly, this description looks al-
so back upon the people, as our Sa-
viour did upon Peter: And teaches
them, First spirituall obedience.
*Obey them that have the rule over you,
and submit your selves, Heh.13.* If
soveraigne Magistrates be Gods, *I
have said, yee are gods:* I am sure,
consecrated Priests may be counted
Angels: And there is a majesticall
and more then humane splendor in
both Offices, and a dutifull submis-
sion due to the dictates of both per-
sons. Saint Pauls proviso had a bet-
ter ground, then some may at the
first imagine; to reject an Angell
from Heaven preaching against his
Gospel, *Galat.1.* For if they will
not beleeve one Angel, why should
they

they beleeve another? If not a *Paul*, why a *Gabriel*? Hast thou then any matter of faith to be resolved, any case of conscience to be cleared, any temptation to be disabled, any suite in heaven to be ended, any petition to Christ to be preferred, any soule-businesse? Why, *Levies* curse is become the peoples blessing, *Divide them in Jacob, and scatter them in Israel*, *Genes. 49*. God hath his *Visors* and Legier-ambassadours in every Parish: Repaire to thy lawfull Pastor; what he bindes and looses with the golden Zone of Christ, what hee shuts and opens with the key of *David*, shall be ratified in Heaven.

Secondly, it teaches them respectfull reverence, *Let the Presbyters that rule well be counted worthy of double honour*, *1.Tim. 5.17*. The Lord could as easily have sent you true

true Angels, but hee was pleased in mercy to teach men by men : Yet that his Ministers shold not lose any due respect , the Angels themselves are joyn'd in commission, and attend upon our divine Liturgie. When Christ the Angell of the Covenant began to preach , the Angels came and plaid *the Deacons, Math.4. Send men to Ioppa, and call for Simon,* says an Angell to Cornelius *Acts 10.* As preferring Saint *Peter* before himselfe in this businesse of conversion. And the Angell confesses , that hee was but *a fellow-servant with the Ministers of the Gospel, Revelat.22.* And indeed the word Evangelist , supposes him to be a good Angell. Let then the majesty of his Master , excuse the defects of his person; let the Law and Message which hee brings, beare out the blemishes of his nature: And let both perswade thee, to give

give him a loving and heartie welcome. If *Abraham* and *Lot* had knowne them to be Angels in the shape of men, they wold(if possible) have given lower obeysance, and higher titles, *Gen. 18. & 19.* *Achilles* was not so proud and furious, but he would with curtesie salute these Messengers in the very style of our Prophet, $\chiαιρετε Κηρυκες, Διδος Αγγελοι.$ Nor were the *Galatians* so rude & barbarous, though so taxed by Saint *Jerome*; but they received the Apostle Saint *Paul*, as an *Angell of God*, Nay, even as *Christ Jesus himselfe.* *Galat. 4. 14.*

Thirdly, It teaches them liberall beneficence. Beside their appointed portions by the Lawes of God and Man; If wee did truly love the sender, how kindly would wee entertain his servants? How *Michah* rejoices, when hee had got a *Levite* into

into his house, *Indg. 17.* How the old man of Gibeah bestirres himself, to lodge and feast a Levite, *Indg. 19.* *Take heed to thy self, that thou forsake not the Levite, as long as thou livest,* *Deut. 12.19.* Much more take heed, that thou Feare the Lord, and honour the Priest, *Eccl. 7.31.* But, O how beautifull upon the mountains are the feet of Evangelicall Messengers, cryes the true Church: If their feet be so beautifull, how glorious are their bodies drest up in Sacerdotall ornaments? Let then prophane *Endomiter, and sacrilegious Hypocrites* scoffe at their name, person, office, and attire; Let them send Gods Messengers upon their base errands, place them below their Serving-men, esteeme them below their Parasites; nay, deride and abuse, persecute & destroy them for their message: But let them know, if the in-
jury

jury of Legates hath been so deeply and bloudily revenged; as the law of Nations, and the Records of History do fully testifie: If foolish *Ha-
mon* lost his Crown, and the *Ammo-
nites* their lives for misusing *Davids* servants, 2. Sam. 10. If the King in the Parable sent forth his Armies, & destroyed them, who slue his Ministers inviting to the Mariage of his Sonne, Matth. 22. Then heare a tumultuous noyse of the Kingdomes of Nations gathered together: The Lord of Hosts mustereth the host of the bat-
tale, Esa. 13. And will revenge the great indignities done to many of his Messengers: Especially when they bring you good tydings of great joy, a Gospell of peace, a co-
venant of grace, a promise of ever-
lasting salvation.

In one word, let the Priest be as an Angell of God in knowing good and

and evill: Let the people piously
seeke the *Law* of him, as an Angell
sent from God: So shall both Priest
and people become *ταύταις*, like
the Angels in purity of holinesse, in per-
fection of happiness, in pathet-
icall singing that *Trisagium*, Holy,
Holy, Holy, Lord God of Sabaoth;
Heaven and Earth are full of the
majesty of thy Glory; to whom the
Father, the Sonne, and the Holy
Ghost, bee all power and prayse

Amen.

*I submit all to the judgement of
my Ecclesiasticall Superiours.*

Aut aberrantem dirige,

Aut dirigentem sequere.

The end.

fisher, J.